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Book Reviews

Beginning Latin. By PERLEY OAKLAND PLACE, Litt. D., Professor of Latin in Syracuse University. New York: The American Book Co. (1919.)

The study of Latin has for the student three fundamental values: first, it affords him mental discipline of the highest character; second, it trains him in the precise use of English; and third, it acquaints (or should acquaint) him with the civilization and literature of one of the very few mighty nations of the past which have made large contributions to the world's culture. These three values are recognized and emphasized in *Beginning Latin*.

The structure of the book and its presentation of the phenomena of the language are in thorough accord with the most approved methods of present-day teaching. At each step the pupil is told *what* to study and *how* to study. Preceding the Introduction are four pages of Suggestions for Study. These pages contain several devices which should commend themselves to the alert teacher: the Notched Card for learning vocabularies, the noun and verb Trellises, the Game of Related English Words, and the Game of Correct Sentences. In almost every chapter are one or more paragraphs of Suggestions for each new point to be learned. "Accuracy and Speed" is the slogan of the book. These are insured by persistent and thorough review. At the beginning of almost every chapter is a Preliminary Review: each fifth chapter is a review, and each tenth chapter a more extended review. Accuracy and speed in reciting forms can be gained only by constant repetition. Declensions and conjugations are not reviewed once only, but many times. The first declension, for example, occurs in this way six times, and the present and perfect active indicative of the first conjugation twelve times.

The book is divided into 60 chapters; chapters 1-30 are for the first half-year, and chapters 31-60 for the second half-year. The chapters are divided into sections, each of which is designed for one lesson. Each chapter is a unit which presents a well-defined amount of forms and syntax; each section is a unit within this larger unit and emphasizes a particular part of the material of its chapter. In the earlier chapters the First Section contains inflections, with an exercise, the Second Section vocabulary, syntax, and an exercise; the Third Section employs in Translation Exercises the vocabulary, inflections, and syntax already given. But one thing is presented at a time and this is reinforced by illustration and repetition.

Worthy of special mention are the vocabularies and exercises. The vocabulary is based on Lodge's *Vocabulary of High-School Latin* and Brown's *Word List*, and meets the requirement of the New York Syllabus for the first

year. The new Latin words to be learned in each chapter are printed in heavy type in a central column; in a column to the left are the corresponding English meanings, while to the right is a column of derivatives. The Latin element of each derivative is printed in *italics*. All the words of the vocabulary are employed in the exercises of that chapter, and employed several times. Each half-year's work contains a most excellent chapter on the formation of Latin words by prefixes and suffixes. In addition to the numerous examples of each type there are laboratory exercises in word formation which correlate the Latin words and cognate English words. Each prefix and suffix is explained at its first appearance, so that the special chapters on Latin Prefixes and Suffixes gather them up and properly emphasize them in a thorough review.

The sentences of the Translation Exercises (both Latin and English) are not disconnected and meaningless, but together build up a definite story which conveys reliable information about the life and history of the Romans, or deals with the pupil's own environment. The book in short is so constructed that it is a teacher within itself. It tells the pupil exactly what to do at each step, how to do it, and how to measure and check up his progress. The most efficient teacher is not that one who can, with a given class, develop a few very brilliant pupils, but that one who can develop the highest average attainment in that class. This book facilitates uniformity of attainment.

Perhaps the strongest and most unique feature of *Beginning Latin* is the emphasis it places on English. To quote from the Preface (page iii): "The value most nearly at hand in studying Latin and the most practical of all reasons for its study is the help given by Latin in understanding and using English. This book, therefore, lays special emphasis upon the relation of Latin to English." Further, as the author has aptly said elsewhere, "The study of Latin is an intensive study of English, and the translation of Latin is laboratory work in English." As already noted, each lesson vocabulary is accompanied by a column of English derivatives, and the pupil is encouraged by frequent Derivation Exercises to find others for himself. When he approaches the first vocabulary he is helped to associate each Latin word with one or more related English words by a special treatment on the Form of Latin Words in English. Both teacher and pupil will welcome the clear statement here given of the types of changes; this will be of constant help in the laboratory exercises on English words, which is one of the important values emphasized by the book. One's vocabulary is limited by the number of words he can spell and accurately define. The student thus has the satisfaction of realizing that his English, as well as his Latin, vocabulary is growing from day to day.

"English grammar is made introductory to each point of Latin syntax" (Preface, page iii). This method, in addition to teaching Latin syntax in the most effective manner, gives valuable training in English syntax. The year spent in studying *Beginning Latin* is also a year spent in studying English grammar. The pupil is thus irresistibly led to compare English and Latin

point by point, to the advantage of both, and he unconsciously develops accuracy and conciseness in the use of his mother-tongue. Incidentally, the statements of Latin syntactical principles are exceedingly lucid and reliable, and they make the book valuable as a reference book for college students. I instance Indirect Discourse (pages 276-79), Indirect Questions (pages 295-96), Gerund and Gerundive (pages 299-302), and Result Clauses (pages 253-55).

Beginning Latin, in addition to laying a firm foundation for the further study of the language while strengthening the student's knowledge of English, seeks also to acquaint him with the outstanding features of the civilization of the ancient Romans, their literature, philosophy, art, and architecture, their military achievements, and their daily life. It bridges for him the intervening centuries and confronts him with the Roman citizen of Cicero's day as he goes about his daily tasks. The study of Latin is in this way *vitalized* and *humanized*.

This subsidiary material is interwoven with the entire structure of the book with such painstaking care that a brief review can scarcely do more than mention some of its more salient points. There are more than twenty Latin Selections, easy and progressive in character, which present to the young student many varied pictures of Roman life. They include incidents from history, anecdotes, fables, episodes from Caesar, stories from Cicero. In them are also found such unusual material as the Prayer of Mary Queen of Scots, and the Story of Joseph from the Vulgate. Scattered through the book are twelve Optional Readings (in English) which in an easy and concise fashion tell the pupil about walls, bridges, the Forum, Roman religion, etc.

The book has three maps: a double map in colors showing the Roman Empire at its largest extent, a colored map of Italy, and a map of Rome. There are also 140 illustrations, five of which are beautiful color plates. These are not inserted at random; they really illustrate the text which they accompany. In them are represented the whole range of classical interests—painting, sculpture, architecture, places of note, military science, and the like. Finally, we must not fail to mention the Latin mottoes which head each chapter. These mottoes have been selected with great care, to the end that there may be instilled into the young student love of God and country, and a spirit of sturdy application.

The three values of Latin—disciplinary value, value for English, and cultural value—are given prominence in *Beginning Latin* to an extent which makes it a pioneer among first-year books. The Suggestions for Study, Optional Readings, Latin Selections, the numerous and apt illustrations, the arrangement of vocabularies and the coherence of the exercises, the frequent and thorough reviews, and, above all, the prominence given to English, these all make Dr. Place's book unique. The book too is pervaded by a spirit of genuine Christian culture, for, while thoroughly preparing for Caesar, it does not unduly stress the military side of Roman life. And, as a distinguished professor in a neighboring institution of learning says, it compels the admiration of scholars and the enthusiasm of students. *Beginning Latin* justifies

the study of Latin and vindicates its right to stand far in the lead of all books for the first year of the study of Latin.

The writer is using the book with a class of college students who, unfortunately, did not have the opportunity to begin the study of Latin in the technical schools from which they came. His experience in the classroom convinces him that it is easily the best first-year book available today, and he is confident that it will meet with a hearty welcome by teachers and educators throughout the United States, and be widely used in the British Empire. The many friends of Dr. Place will recognize in *Beginning Latin* the deep imprint of his fine personality, his rare scholarship, and his intense enthusiasm for Latin. The book is a splendid addition to the scholarly productions of Syracuse University and a distinct contribution to the cause of classics and sound education.

In collaboration with Dr. Place in the preparation of *Beginning Latin* were Curtis C. Bushnell, Ph.D., Professor of Classics in Syracuse University, and Harold L. Cleasby, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Latin in Hunter College, New York, N.Y. Valuable assistance was also given by Alvah T. Otis, A.M., High School, White Plains, N.Y. The following read the proof sheets and made timely suggestions: Professor Albert A. Howard, Harvard University; Professor John Greene, Colgate University; Professor John K. Lord, Dartmouth College; Mr. Joseph P. Behm, Central High School, Syracuse, N.Y.; Principal Elmer E. Bogart, Morris High School, New York, N.Y.; Mrs. Harriet Kitts, High School, Schenectady, N.Y.; Principal F. R. Parker, High School, Elmira, N.Y.

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The following publications of the American Classical League, January, 1920, may be obtained from Andrew F. West, Princeton, New Jersey. The prices include postage prepaid. Remittance must accompany orders.

1. *The Study of Latin and Greek and the Democracy*, by Alfred Croiset, dean of the Faculty of Letters in the Sorbonne. Whoever wants to learn quickly what the classics mean to France should read this clear, simple, and graceful statement by a French authority of the first rank. His statement goes to the root of the matter and is of special value for America today. Single copies 5 cents, 15 copies for 10 cents, 100 copies for 50 cents.

2. *An Engineer's View of Classical Study*, by John N. Vedder, Union University, Schenectady, New York. The extensive practical engineering interests centered in Schenectady and our current engineering instruction give the author unusual opportunities for seeing what is the matter with engineering education and make more convincing his strong and aggressive plea for the classics as essential to the best education. Single copies 5 cents, 15 copies for 10 cents, 100 copies for 50 cents.